

NEW JERSEY MILITIA NEWSLETTER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 4

October 2012

All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

SPLC: Hate List, Inc.

The Southern Poverty Law Center – which has labeled [the militia], WND and other conservative organizations “hate groups” – is spending massive amounts on hate-crime propaganda.

The SPLC bills itself as a nonprofit civil rights group dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry. However, the Capital Research Center's recently published “Southern Poverty Law Center, Wellspring of Manufactured Hate” by James Simpson, details how the SPLC designates conservative groups as hate groups similar to the Ku Klux Klan and Aryan Nations for the purpose of raising money.

The report noted that the SPLC has more than \$238 million in assets, yet the organization spends nearly 20 percent of its budget on fundraising.

According to the SPLC's 2010 tax return, the group spent \$12.5 million maintaining, publishing and promoting its hate group reports.

The tax returns also noted a net gain of \$28.8 million, prompting Simpson to ask why it continues to raise funds.

CRC Vice President Scott Walter said, “Spending so much on fundraising while they are sitting on hundreds of millions of dollars – along with their lavish offices – is contributing to their losing their respect and prestige. When you compare the amount that is actually used to defend people in court, that is a very small amount compared to their balance sheet and far less than what they spend on fundraising, even though they have enough money to get by for years and years.”

According to Simpson, the SPLC has benefited from the Bernie Madoff Ponzi scam. The group's biggest benefactor was the Picower Foundation,

founded by Jeffrey Picower, who made \$5 billion in profits from his “investments” with Madoff.

Following Picower's death in 2009, the estate eventually agreed to pay \$7.2 billion to compensate Madoff's victims. Simpson asked if the SPLC will ever refund any of Picower's donations to help those who lost their life savings in Madoff's scheme.

In an article for the Progressive, SPLC Co-Founder Morris Dees' first business partner, Millard Fuller offered a different mission statement for the SPLC than that presented on the group's website.

“Morris and I, from the first day of our partnership, shared the overriding purpose of making a pile of money,” Fuller said. “We were not particular about how we did it; we just wanted to be independently rich. During the eight years we worked together, we never wavered in that resolve.”

The group's disproportionate emphasis on fundraising over helping those it claims to represent has sparked criticism from left-wing groups such as Nation magazine and Harper's.

A Harper's article titled, “The Church of Morris Dees” compared him to former evangelist Jim Bakker, who went to prison for accounting fraud.

“He's the Jim and Tammy Faye Baker of the civil rights movement,” Farmer said, “though I don't mean to malign Jim and Tammy Faye.”

Harper's also described Dees' fundraising as “flagrantly misleading”, while the Nation called him “the arch-salesman of hate mongering.”

The SPLC frequently accuses organizations such as WND, Family Research Council and even the American Constitution Party as adhering to “extreme anti-government doctrines.”

The FRC, which advocates for traditional marriage, has said the SPLC's designation of the organization as a hate group may have been what inspired a gunman to shoot a security guard in August. [See the following article.]

WND columnist Matt Barber, who is affiliated with Liberty Counsel Action, noted the shooting was a logical outcome of the SPLC's policy of designating conservative organizations “hate groups.”

“This was intended to dehumanize Christian organizations and smear as hate the biblical view of sexual morality,” Barber said.

Because the SPLC uses hate groups to raise money, designating pro-family and other conservative organization as such is directly beneficial to the organization.

-- WorldNetDaily, Sept. 29, 2012

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Before Shooting SPLC Put Family Research Council on ‘Hate Map’

The man who shot a security guard at the Family Research Council on Wednesday was “given a license” to do so because of groups such as the Southern Poverty Law Center that have labeled the FRC a “hate group,” said FRC President Tony Perkins. The SPLC has posted what it calls a “Hate Map” on its website that points to the FRC as a “hate” group located in Washington, D.C.

At a press conference on Thursday, Perkins said, “I want to express my appreciation to the groups and organizations that we do not agree with on many public policy issues who have also expressed their outrage at what took place here yesterday.”

“But I would ask them to go a step further and to join us in calling for an end to the reckless rhetoric that I

believe led to yesterday's incident," he said.

"And that does bring me to my final point," said Perkins. "Let me be clear, that Floyd Corkins was responsible for firing the shot that wounded one of our colleagues and our friend Leo Johnson. But Corkins was given a license to shoot an unarmed man by organizations like the Southern Poverty Law Center that have been reckless in labeling organizations hate groups because they disagree with them on public policy."

"And I believe the Southern Poverty Law Center should be held accountable for their reckless use of terminology that is leading to the intimidation and what the FBI here has categorized as an act of domestic terrorism," he said

The suspect had been volunteering at The DC Center for the LGBT Community. The DC Center released a statement condemning the violence, which was signed by 40 other local and national LGBT groups.

CNSNews.com on Thursday left repeated messages with the Southern Poverty Law Center seeking an interview to discuss the Family Research Council and its designation on the SPLC's "Hate Map." The SPLC, however, did not respond before this story was posted.

-- CNSNews.com Aug. 16, 2012

Ten Reasons Why Obama Is Bad News for the Second Amendment

1. Obama supported a shutdown of all gun stores within 5 miles of a school or park – that would have closed 99% of gun stores nationwide.
2. Obama supported Ted Kennedy's ban to outlaw all deer-hunting ammunition.
3. Obama green-lighted discussions that would lead to a U.N. gun ban treaty, signaling the U.N. that America would support steps toward global civilian disarmament.
4. Obama is one vote away from a Supreme Court gun-ban majority to rubber-stamp gun controls laws and overturn the Second Amendment.
5. Obama's regulatory "czar", Cass Sunstein, wants to ban hunting and says animals should be represented in court.
6. Obama is trying to slash funding for the Armed Pilots Program designed to prevent terror attacks.
7. Obama voted to allow reckless lawsuits designed to bankrupt American

gun makers.

8. Obama's administration illegally smuggled guns to Mexican drug lords, then imposed illegal gun registration in four states, blaming gun owners for his administration's insane policy.

9. Obama's Attorney General Eric Holder said we need to "really brainwash people" against guns.

10. Obama admits he's coming for our guns, telling Sarah Brady, "We are working on it [gun control], but under the radar."

Share this message! Download a printable version of this at www.NRAILA-ObamaCard.org

-- NRA Institute for Legislative Action flyer

Senate bill would protect ammunition from EPA grasp

Should President Obama win in November, it's a certainty he'll try again to ban lead ammunition. Just two months into his first term, the National Park Service announced it was banning lead bullets. The blowback from sportsmen was intense, so the agency backed down. Mr. Obama surely will exert "more flexibility" in a second term to accomplish this backdoor assault on the Second Amendment.

Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) introduced a bill to make sure that can't happen; the body voted to take up the Sportsmen Act during the Nov. 13 lame-duck session.

The National Shooting Sports Foundation's Larry Keane told The Washington Times, "If the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) were to ban traditional ammunition, it would destroy the ammunition industry in the U.S., crater conservation funding and create massive shortages."

The ban is a priority for groups like PETA, the Humane Society and the radical Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) that want to prohibit anything but "nontoxic bullets." This is mostly an excuse to sue ammo manufacturers out of business. In June, CBD filed suit against the EPA for not addressing the "toxic lead in hunting ammunition that frequently poisons our wildlife."

Don Saba, a research scientist and National Rifle Association board member said, "The lead that is used in ammunition is metallic lead and is a very inert material that does not dissolve in water and it is not absorbed by plants or animals. There is a tremendous toxicity difference between

the highly inert metallic lead used in ammunition and the highly toxic lead compounds used in legacy leaded paints."

The ammunition demonized by the self-styled environmentalists funds highly successful animal-conservation efforts. The Pittman-Robertson Act of 1937 set up an excise tax, now 11 percent, on ammunition and long guns and 10 percent for handguns. The resulting \$7 billion has gone toward restoring habitats for wild turkey, bald eagle, duck, elk and antelope populations.

America's ammunition industry manufactures 9 billion cartridges a year, 95 percent of which have lead components. Lead is used in bullets because it is the perfect material — dense, heavy, soft and inexpensive.

The NSSF estimates a lead ban would result in tens of thousands of jobs lost as prices would necessarily rise 190 percent. Mr. Obama has killed enough jobs in his first term. The last thing our economy needs is another assault on successful businesses.

-- Emily Miller, Washington Times, Sept. 27, 2012

Brits wising up?

'Expect to be shot if you burgle gun owners', judge warns criminals

Joshua O'Gorman and Daniel Mansell were blasted with a legally-held shotgun after they smashed their way into the isolated rural home of Andy Ferrie and his wife Tracey last month.

The two men were arrested when they arrived at hospital seeking treatment. Mr and Mrs Ferrie were also arrested and questioned for more than 40 hours on suspicion of causing grievous bodily harm. They were later released without charge.

Judge Michael Pert QC, told the men: "If you burgle a house where the householder owns a legally-held shotgun, that is the chance you take. You cannot come to court and ask for a lighter sentence because of it."

Andrew Frymann, mitigating for O'Gorman, said that being shot had been like a "near-death experience" for which his client was not prepared. Judge Pert said the arrest of Mr and Mrs Ferrie was just as severe.

The judge's remarks were widely welcomed by those arguing that the justice system needs to be more on the side of the victim of crime rather than the perpetrator.

Patrick Mercer, an MP who

In the beginning of change the patriot is a scarce man, brave, hated and scorned. When his cause succeeds, however, the timid join him, for then it costs nothing to be a patriot. – Mark Twain

has campaigned for a change in the law to allow home owners more protection when defending their property, said: "Judge Pert's comment is a welcome contrast to the extraordinary comments of Judge Peter Bowers when he recently described burglars as demonstrating bravery."

The debate over the right to defend property began when Tony Martin killed a burglar at his Norfolk home in 1999 and was jailed for life. The sentence was reduced on appeal to manslaughter and five years' jail.

Last year Peter Flanagan, who fatally stabbed an armed burglar at his home in Salford, Great Manchester, escaped prosecution after he was found to have been acting in self defence.

-- Martin Evans, Crime Correspondent, www.telegraph.co.uk, 26 Sept. 2012

The Unbelievable Ways Schools Are Now Monitoring Children

By David Rosen

The 1998 Children's Online Privacy Protection Act requires Web sites aimed at kids to get parental consent before gathering information about children under 13. Many companies, most notably Facebook, are fighting proposed revisions to COPPA.

But young people are also being monitored inside and outside school, by RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tags, GPS tracking software, and CCTV video cameras. According to school authorities, the devices not only increase security, but prevent truancy, cut down on theft and even improve students' eating habits.

The system known as "Tag and Track" consists of a photo ID card with a RFID chip embedded in it. As a student passes an RFID reader, data is sent to a server, providing an attendance list (sent to the teacher's PDA), and tracking the student's movement throughout the day.

In San Antonio, TX, John Jay High School and Anson Jones Middle School, plan to use the nametags to pinpoint student locations both at the school and outside. Students are required to use the microchip ID when checking out library books, registering for classes and paying for school lunches. Pascual Gonzalez, a school district spokesman, said, "We want to harness the power of technology to make schools safer, know where our students are all the time in a school, and increase revenues."

San Antonio news media reports the local school district loses \$175,000 [in federal funds] per day because of late or absent students.

In Austin, TX, high school students, with parent permission, are being outfitted with GPS devices to help cut truancy. It reportedly increases attendance by around 12 percent.

In Anaheim, CA, seventh- and eighth-graders with four or more unexcused absences have "volunteered" to carry a GPS device. Participation in the program will enable the students to avoid being prosecuted and a potential stay in juvenile hall. Each school day, the students get an automated "wake-up" phone call. Five times a day they are required to enter a code that tracks their locations: as they leave for school, when they arrive at school, at lunchtime, when they leave school and at 8 pm. An adult "coach" calls them at least three times a week to make sure they get to school. Like San Antonio, Anaheim schools lose about \$35 per day for each absent student

In Bay Shore, NY, students designated overweight or obese are given wristwatch-like devices that count heartbeats, detect motion and even track their sleeping habits.

The Electronic Freedom Foundation warns "... an RFID chip allows for far more than that minimal record-keeping. Instead, it provides the potential for nearly constant monitoring of a child's physical location." The consequences of such tracking are serious: "If RFID records show a child moving around a lot, could she be tagged as hyperactive? If he doesn't move around a lot, could he get a reputation for laziness?"

Not all student-tracking programs work out as planned. In 2005, an elementary school in Sutter, CA, abandoned a Tag and Track program after the EFF and ACLU raised concerns that the program breached children's right to privacy.

In 2010 Blake Robbins, a sophomore in Pennsylvania's Lower Merion School District, reported that a school official confronted him for engaging in "improper behavior" at home. It was revealed that the laptops the school issued to high-school students came equipped with software that enabled school administrators to spy on students and even their families in their homes.

Administrators argued that the software helped find lost or stolen computers; but they admitted that they never told students or their parents

about the remote access feature. Faced with a class-action suit from Robbins and 1,800 students, the school district settled for an estimated \$600,000

Cameras popularly known as closed-circuit television (CCTV) are being placed throughout schools as well as outside the buildings and on school buses, based on the ostensible need for an increase in security whether involving a Columbine-like threat, fist fights and/or property theft.

In fact, the federal 1999 Safe Schools/Healthy Students program has pumped more than \$2 billion into 365 urban, rural, suburban and tribal school districts.

The San Antonio, TX, school system received a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to install a CCTV system in school cafeterias and embed bar codes on food trays in order to curb high rates of childhood obesity by monitoring student eating practices. Dr. Roberto Trevino of the San Antonio-based Social and Health Research Center acknowledged, "We're going to snap a picture of the food tray and we will know what has been served."

It's the ostensible threat of violence that is driving school districts to adopt CCTV surveillance systems. Administrators in Biloxi, MS, claim that surveillance has improved classroom discipline and raised test scores. Utica Community Schools, MI, puts real-time surveillance footage on hallway screens so that students can see they are being monitored. According to school officials, it serves as a deterrent to questionable behavior.

The Connetquot Central School District in Islip, NY, claims that the system cut vandalism by 60 percent. More troubling, the school system allows the Suffolk County Police Department to access the cameras.

In Overton County, TN, the school recorded 10- to 14-year-old girls undressing in preparation for basketball practice. The images were accessible through the Internet. In 2008, the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that a school may not install security cameras inside locker rooms.

American school-age children face an unprecedented assault on their privacy. All their online activities are being aggressively tracked by marketers, including Disney, online social media sites like Facebook and large data aggregators. Equally

troubling, their in-school lives, and out-of-school activities like riding on a school bus, are being captured through surveillance programs using RFID, CCTV and other techniques.

Few parents or children are fully aware of the scope of the tracking and surveillance now going on in American schools. Three simple questions need to be addressed: What is happening to all the personal data captured about the students? How long it is being retained? And are school administrators providing it to law enforcement authorities or commercial vendors? – AlterNet 8 October 12

Senate Report Faults DHS "Fusion Centers"

By Jason Leopold

A Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs subcommittee found that regional intelligence-gathering offices, so called "fusion centers", have failed to identify terrorist threats, violated Americans' civil liberties and largely wasted taxpayers' money.

The probe was to determine what kind of impact fusion centers have had on the intelligence community's efforts to thwart terrorist plots. The resulting 146-page report is highly critical of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The centers were created in the wake of the 9/11 attacks to serve as regional focal points for "the receipt, analysis, gathering and sharing of threat-related information among federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) partners," according to the DHS web site

Of the reported 72 state and local centers scattered across the country, four apparently exist only on paper.

The inquiry was unable to account for a vast majority of the funds the DHS has spent on fusion centers between 2003 and 2011. The panel was forced to rely on a rough estimate: between \$289 million and \$1.4 billion.

Money earmarked for domestic counterterrorism efforts was used to purchase gadgets such as "hidden 'shirt button' cameras, "cell phone tracking devices and other surveillance equipment unrelated to the analytical mission of a fusion center," as well as dozens of flat-screen televisions and sport utility vehicles.

"The subcommittee investigation could identify no reporting which uncovered a terrorist threat, nor could it identify a contribution such

fusion center reporting made to disrupt an active terrorist plot," the report stated.

Furthermore, fusion centers "sometimes endanger[ed] citizens' civil liberties and Privacy Act protections." The report cites instances where fusion centers prepared draft reports about the titles of books American Muslims read and a US citizen who gave a motivational speech on "positive parenting" at a Muslim organization; the information was then illegally retained on government computers at DHS headquarters.

Civil liberties groups, notably the American Civil Liberties Union, claim the fusion centers operate "with little oversight at a time when new technology, government powers and zeal in the 'war on terrorism' are combining to threaten our privacy at an unprecedented level and turn America into a surveillance society."

The subcommittee agreed with that assessment.

However, Congress, "which has repeatedly chosen to support and praise fusion center efforts, without providing the oversight and direction necessary to make sure those efforts were cost effective and useful," also bears "significant responsibility for these failures," the report said.

The Senate subcommittee report doesn't call for DHS to stop supporting fusion centers. Rather, the report calls for Congress and DHS to "revisit the statutory basis for DHS support of fusion centers."

-- <http://truth-out.org> 03 October 12

Ed.: anyone willing to bet that "fusion centers" don't become another deathless federal department?

Is the Greek Crisis a Harbinger of Our Future?

By Sarah Page

In August 2012, fifty-five percent of Greek youth aged 15-24 are out of work.

"The first visual sign of the crisis is traffic. There are no cars in the streets. Big avenues and streets in Athens are empty," relates Katia, a self-employed woman (who prefers her real name not be used).

"On the most commercial and expensive streets, one-fourth of the stores are closed down," says Niki Kerameus, a lawyer in Athens. "People don't go out anymore. Even in the richest neighborhoods, you see people going through garbage. Begging is very common. Often you see people dressed for work in suits in line to receive food."

In 2009, Greeks learned that their government had "falsified budget figures, concealing a swollen debt that was growing rapidly in the wake of the global economic meltdown." Its foreign lenders have supplied Greece with loans. However, the funds mostly cover only the interest on the country's massive debt.

Greek protests against plans to cut public spending and raise taxes have become legendary. Some of the protests have turned violent, with accusations of police brutality.

Charalambos Petrakis, a self-employed English tutor, says, "Pensions have been reduced dramatically, most drugstores are closed and small businesses are closing. Pharmaceutical companies are not delivering drugs, and many people are dying from cancer and diabetes. Tourism has decreased and young people are leaving. People can stay alive, but we don't have any prospects."

"Austerity aggravates the situation. Without economic development, we can't pay back the banks or establish an economic foundation. The same thing is happening in Portugal, Spain, Cyprus, and Italy."

-- TruthOut News Analysis, 07 October 2012

Hollywood's evolving take on gun rights

By John Pierce

In 1999, Handgun Control, Inc., (since re-labeled the Brady Campaign) ran a full page ad in USA Today entitled "Open Letter to the National Rifle Association."

The letter called for a nationwide "one handgun a month" rule, waiting periods for handgun purchases, an end to private sales, and a complete and permanent ban on so-called "assault weapons" as well as normal capacity magazines.

Signing this "open letter" were dozens of Hollywood personalities: Alec Baldwin, Candice Bergen, Cher, Kevin Costner, Phil Donahue, Richard Dreyfus, and Spike Lee.

But there are other signers who make a great deal of money starring in movies that glorify gunplay but who wish to disarm law-abiding citizens.

So why talk about this now? Well ... the recent release of *Expendables 2*. This movie is the perfect microcosm of the divide on gun rights in Hollywood.

On the pro-gun side we will start with Chuck Norris, the honorary chairman of the NRA's "Trigger The Vote" campaign.

The next pro-gun star from the Expendables is Bruce Willis who considers gun-control bad public policy.

But now we must turn to the anti-gun stars, starting with Arnold Schwarzenegger. Arnold's run for the governorship of California featured a promise that he "supports the Second Amendment" followed by a list of "responsibilities that gun owners must follow in owning a firearm" such as submitting to the ban on sporting firearms, giving up private sales, and complying with storage requirements that make self-defense virtually impossible.

And finally we turn to Sylvester Stallone. Stallone, living in the UK, has called for door-to-door confiscation of all handguns in the U.S.

But a new era appears to be dawning in Hollywood. Recently, in an interview with the BBC, Ice T deftly defended the right to keep and bear arms in the face of hard questioning.

And finally, the dynamic duo of Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. Brad recently bought Angelina a private shooting range at their home in France. And why wouldn't he? After all, Angelina is quoted as saying that shooting guns is a bit of an "aphrodisiac."

Need I say more? Well played Mr. Pitt. Well played indeed.

In a recent interview with British magazine Live, Brad waxed somewhat poetic about his childhood with guns.

"I got my first BB (air) gun when I was in nursery school. I got my first shotgun by first grade. I had shot a handgun by third grade and I grew up in a pretty sane environment."

Talking about the Aurora, Colorado shooting, he defended gun ownership by law abiding citizens as a bulwark against criminals.

"I absolutely don't believe you can put sanctions or shackles on what is made. Nor do I want to pretend the world is different than what we witnessed that night.

"America is a country founded on guns. It's in our DNA. It's very strange but I feel better having a gun. I really do. I don't feel safe, I don't feel the house is completely safe, if I don't have one hidden somewhere."

He ended the interview with a slap at those who would use such tragedies to promote their anti-gun agendas.

"To turn around and ask us to give up our guns ... we're going to give up ours and the bad guys are still going to get theirs. It's just in our thinking. I'm telling you, we don't know America without guns." -- <http://monachuslex.com> October 11, 2012

Criminals and the guns they carry

By Greg Ellifritz

"If you know your enemies and know yourself, you can win a hundred battles without a single loss," Chinese philosopher Sun Tzu said over 2000 years ago in his book The Art of War. It is just as useful now as it was so many centuries ago.

Armed citizens spend countless hours trying to find the perfect weapon system in one easy-to-carry package. They are truly taking Sun Tzu's advice as they attempt to "know themselves".

But how much time does the average CCW permit holder spend on studying criminal behavior in order to "know your enemy?" Most of my students don't study criminal behavior nearly as much as they should.

The primary reason is that most honest citizens don't come into contact with hardened criminals on a daily basis.

In my full-time job as a police training officer, all the guns my department seizes from criminals end up in my office. Over the past several years, I have been collecting information about these weapons to share with my officers and the students in my classes. Please keep in mind that this is a very small sample and it may not reflect the threats that YOU face. My agency is relatively small and patrols a very affluent suburban community in the Midwest. The crime rate is very low. It certainly isn't Miami or Los Angeles, but over time, I've amassed quite a database.

That data I will report below comes from the last 85 weapons that my agency has seized from criminals. I did not include guns that were donated to the department or guns used in suicides here. The majority of the weapons detailed here were taken from armed robbers and other types of criminals who were carrying guns in the commission of their crimes.

Discussion

The most likely firearm threat a citizen in my community is likely to face is from a handgun. Roughly 79% are revolvers or pistols. Of the 67 handguns carried by

criminals in this study, only 17 of them (25%) were below .35 caliber. The vast majority were medium to larger caliber weapons.

Lessons to Learn

1) If the armed citizen is going to face a criminal attacker, the criminal is likely to be armed most likely with a 9mm auto pistol. That tells me I really don't want to be carrying a small .32 automatic pocket gun. Carry enough gun!

2) Make sure your weapon is loaded and functional! Don't carry with the chamber empty (that's almost the same as being unloaded), buy a quality handgun and keep it both clean and well-lubricated.

3) Make sure your weapon is fully loaded with high quality ammunition. Any of the major brand jacketed hollowpoint bullets is likely to be fine. Ensure the gun cycles reliably with your chosen ammunition.

Conclusion

Now that you know a little bit more about your enemy, you can better prepare yourself. Carry a quality weapon. Keep it clean and lubricated. Load it with good ammunition. Train until you can't fail.

If Sun Tzu had guns back in his day, I bet he'd tell you the same thing.

– *A much longer version of this article appeared in Concealed Carry Magazine*

NYPD: "the seventh biggest army in the world"

The NYPD is the biggest police force in the country, with over 34,000 uniformed officers, and 51,000 employees overall -- more than the FBI. It has a proposed budget of \$4.6 billion for 2013, almost 15 percent of the entire city's budget.

NYC's population is a little over 8 million. That means that there are 4.18 police officers per 1,000 people. By comparison, Los Angeles, the second largest city in the U.S. with 3.8 million people, has only 9,895 officers--a ratio of 2.6 police per 1,000 people.

What has the NYPD been doing with all that cash and manpower? In addition to ticketing minorities for standing outside of their homes, spying on Muslims who live in New Jersey, abusing protesters, and gunning down black teens over weed, the NYPD has expanded into a massive global anti-terrorism operation with surveillance and military capabilities unparalleled in the history of US law enforcement.

In an email published by WikiLeaks, an FBI official joked about how shocked Americans would be if they knew how egregiously the NYPD is stomping all over their civil liberties.

Last fall, Mayor Bloomberg famously bragged, "I have my own army in the NYPD, which is the seventh biggest army in the world." So far he's refrained from imposing military rule on the city, at least in the white neighborhoods, but the department nevertheless boasts an impressive arsenal.

Police Commissioner Ray Kelly told "60 Minutes" that the NYPD could shoot down a plane. When asked for details at a press conference, Mayor Bloomberg said, "The NYPD has lots of capabilities that you don't know about and you won't know about."

The *New York Times* has reported that the department's Harbor unit has 6 submarine drones; four cost \$75,000 and the two others cost \$120,000. They are developing a portable radar that can see under clothes in order to search for weapons. Militaristic "Hercules teams," are deployed to random parts of the city armed with automatic weapons and body armor. Their explicitly stated role is to terrify people. In a piece by *Popular Mechanics*, detective Abad Nieves described the unit's job thusly: "The response we usually get is, 'Holy s---!' [...] That's the reaction we want. We are in the business of scaring people—we just want to scare the right people."

Whether you're overseas or across the river in Jersey, there's no longer any need to watch "NYPD Blue" for a glimpse at the famed officers. You can simply walk outside. The force operates in 11 foreign cities, including London, Lyons, Hamburg, Tel Aviv and Toronto. This year they added Kfar Saba, Israel, to their list of conquests -- there, the NYPD has its own office complete with a department insignia and a banner inside which reads, "The New York Police Department. The Greatest Police Department in the World."

-- Tana Ganeva and Laura Gottesdiener, AlterNet, 27 Sept. 12

The Global War on Christians in the Muslim World

By Ayan Hirsi Ali

We hear so often about Muslims as victims of abuse in the West and in the Arab Spring's fight against tyranny. But a different kind of war is underway—thousands of Christians are being killed in the Islamic world because of their religion.

The portrayal of Muslims as victims or heroes is at best partially accurate. The violent oppression of Christians has become the norm in Muslim nations stretching from West Africa to Oceania, murdering Christians and driving them away.

The media's reticence is most likely due to lobbying by groups such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation—a kind of United Nations of Islam centered in Saudi Arabia—and the Council on American-Islamic Relations. They have been remarkably successful [labeling] perceived anti-Muslim discrimination as "Islamophobia"—a term that is meant to elicit moral disapproval.

But Islamophobia pales in comparison with the bloody Christophobia currently coursing through Muslim countries. This religious intolerance has to stop. Nothing less than the fate of Christianity—and ultimately of all religious minorities—in the Islamic world is at stake

From blasphemy laws to murders to bombings to mutilations and the burning of holy sites, Christians live in fear. In Nigeria which has the largest Christian minority (40 percent) an Islamist radical outfit called Boko Haram which means "Western education is sacrilege" has stated that it will kill all Christians in the country.

In January 2012, Boko Haram was responsible for 54 deaths. In 2011 it killed at least 510 people and destroyed more than 350 churches.

Christophobia in Sudan takes a very different form. The Sunni Muslim government has for decades tormented Christian and animist minorities. Even though Sudan has granted semi-independence to South Sudan, Christians are still subjected to aerial

bombardment, targeted killings, the kidnapping of children, and other atrocities

Both kinds of persecution—by extragovernmental and agents of the state—have come together in Egypt. Last year Coptic Christians (11 percent of the population) protested against attacks by Islamists—including church burnings, rapes, mutilations, and murders. During the protest, Egyptian security forces killed at least 24 and wounded more than 300 people.

Egypt is not the only Arab country that seems bent on wiping out its Christian minority. Since 2003 more than 900 Iraqi Christians have been killed by terrorist violence in Baghdad alone, and 70 churches have been burned.

The 2.8 million Christians in Pakistan live in fear not only of Islamist terrorists but also of blasphemy laws. A Christian woman was sentenced to death for allegedly insulting the Prophet Muhammad.

Such cases are not unusual in Pakistan. Simply to declare belief in the Christian Trinity is considered blasphemous, since it contradicts Muslim theological doctrines.

Not even Indonesia has been immune to Christophobia. According to the *Christian Post*, the number of violent incidents committed against religious minorities increased by nearly 40 percent, to 276, between 2010 and 2011.

The litany of suffering could be extended to Iran, Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia, where the religious police regularly raid the homes of Christians and charge them with blasphemy.

It should be clear from this catalog of atrocities that anti-Christian violence is a major and underreported problem of anti-Christian animus by Muslims that transcends cultures, regions, and ethnicities

Instead of falling for overblown tales of Western Islamophobia, let's take a real stand against the Christophobia infecting the Muslim world. Tolerance is for everyone—except the intolerant.

-- Newsweek, Feb. 6, 2012

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ISSN 1523-4657

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